

## **New Biometric Procedures for Foreigners Entering the Republic of Korea Go Into Effect on January 1, 2012**

The U.S. Embassy in Seoul is transmitting the following information as a public service to all U.S. citizens in the Republic of Korea.

The Government of the Republic of Korea has advised the Embassy that beginning on Sunday, January 1, 2012, all foreign visitors to South Korea will have their biometric data collected at ports of entry (international airports and seaports). This means that starting on January 1, 2012, U.S. citizens entering the Republic of Korea will have their two index fingerprints electronically scanned at the same time a digital photograph is taken of their face by Korea Immigration Service inspectors. This process will take place at the same time the traveler's passport is inspected at an immigration booth and is not expected to add significantly to the amount of time it takes to enter the Republic of Korea. This is similar to the process that visitors to the United States must go through when they enter the U.S. from overseas.

Exempted from this new requirement are children under 17 years of age (newborn through age 16), as well as foreign government and international organization officials and their accompanying immediate family members. Within Korea questions about this new requirement should be directed to the Korea Immigration Service, and outside the country to the nearest ROK embassy or consulate.

U.S. citizens living or traveling in South Korea are encouraged to enroll with the Embassy through the State Department's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) website: <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/>. U.S. citizens without internet access may enroll in person at the U.S. Embassy. Enrollment is a voluntary way of telling us that you, as a U.S. citizen, are in Korea, whether for a long-term stay or for a short visit. In the event of an emergency, we use enrollment information to communicate with you. This could include a family emergency in which relatives in the United States request that the Embassy contact you.

For the latest security information worldwide, U.S. citizens should regularly monitor the State Department's website at <http://travel.state.gov> where the current Worldwide Caution, Travel Warnings, and Travel Alerts can be found. Up-to-date information on security can also be obtained by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll free in the United States, or, for callers from outside the United States and Canada, a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays).

American Citizen Services  
U.S. Embassy Seoul  
188 Sejong-daero, Jongno-gu  
Seoul 110-710, Korea